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MORTALITY STATISTICS OF ITALY.

Statistica delle Cause di Morte Nell' Anno 1899. Roma, 1901.

This summary of the mortality statistics of Italy for 1899 is issued by the Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. The population employed as a basis of estimate is that of June 30, 1899, which is estimated to have been 32,112,900. (The census population of Feb., 1901, was 32,450,750). The total number of deaths in 1899 was 703,393, which was equivalent to a death rate of 21.9, being the lowest death rate recorded since the system of accurate records was established. The highest death rate was 28.1 per 1000 in 1887.

The deaths of males were 355,654, and those of females were 347,739.

The explanation of the decided fall in the death rate is to be found in the tables of causes of death, and shows that the decrease is mainly in the class of infectious diseases.

The following figures for the years 1887 and 1899 are selected from the tables, the relative figures being given as more significant than the absolute figures :—

DEATH RATES PER MILLION INHABITANTS, ITALY, 1877 AND 1899.

Causes of Deaths.	1887.	1899.	Causes of Deaths.	1887.	1899.
Small-Pox	550	7	Puerperal Fever . .	85	41
Measles	806	231	Cancer	428	519
Scarlet Fever . . .	496	140	Apoplexy and Paralysis .	1,124	1,132
Diphtheria	956	515	Bronchitis	2,165	1,824
Whooping Cough . .	378	246	Pneumonia	2,163	2,247
Influenza	18	133	Heart Disease	1,366	1,643
Malarial Fever . . .	713	337	Diarrheal Diseases . .	3,372	2,961
Erysipelas	178	93	Kidney Diseases . . .	256	399
Syphilis	64	73	Violence (Accidents) .	379	319
Rabies	3	2	Homicidal	52	44
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1,078	1,092	Suicidal	49	63
Tabes mesenterica . .	462	273			

By the foregoing table it appears that the decrease in the mortality from infectious diseases much more than counterbalances the increase in the so-called local diseases. The same observation is

true of most countries in which the mortality has been recorded in the same periods.

The deaths of infants under one year were 168,244, or 23.9 per cent of the total mortality. The principal causes of infantile mortality were debility, diarrheal diseases, acute bronchitis and convulsions.

The deaths from violence are carefully classified by causes, ages, sex, seasons, and conjugal conditions. The accidental and homicidal deaths had slightly diminished, comparing the first three years, 1887, 1888 and 1889, with the last three years, 1897, 1898 and 1899, and the suicides had increased. The principal modes of death by accident were drowning, falls and burning, these three modes constituting two-thirds of the accidental deaths.

The accidental deaths from poisoning in 1899 were 158, of which 18 were by mushrooms, 13 by corrosive sublimate, 16 by sulphuric acid, and 18 by the bites of snakes and other poisonous animals. The principal poisons used for suicidal purposes were corrosive sublimate, sulphuric acid, phosphorus, strychnine, sulphate of copper and arsenic.

Of each 1000 suicides for the whole period of 1887-'99, 263 were among farmers, herdsmen and shepherds, 64 among merchants and tradesmen, 53 of clerks, 53 of soldiers, 28 of metal workers, 28 of shoemakers, and 24 of carpenters.

S. W. A.